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Most Say Ten Commandments Apply to Self, Not Others

PRINCETON, N.J. — In an era that some social observers describe as a period of value neutrality and relativism, many religious leaders have called for a renewed emphasis on the teachings of the Bible, including the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are the covenant (also called the Decalogue), delivered by Jehovah to Moses on two stone tablets at Mount Sinai, and are viewed in both the Old and New Testaments as binding on all humankind.

A review of Gallup surveys conducted in recent years shows the following:

- While as many as 8 in 10 adults and teenagers believe that the Ten Commandments are still valid rules for living today, they have a tough time recalling what those rules are. A 1980 Gallup Youth Survey, for example, found that only 35% of teens nationwide could name five or more of the Commandments, and only three in 100 could name all ten.

  The most easily remembered Commandment, the one that prohibits stealing, was named by 68% of the teens. Surprisingly, more teens knew of the Commandment against adultery than the one banning murder.

  Only the above three Commandments were named by more than half of the teens polled. From there, ability to recall the rules dropped sharply, ending with the Commandment prohibiting the worship of idols, which was named by only 10%.

- Many Americans feel that they themselves adhere to the Ten Commandments, but have doubts about other people in this respect. This topic was covered in a major survey conducted during the early 1980's on religious, ethical, social and political values. The survey was conducted by Gallup-affiliated organizations in Europe for the Amsterdam-based European Value Systems study group. The surveys in the U.S. and Canada were conducted by Gallup organizations for the Washington-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA).

Here are the questions and U.S. results:

Here is a card on which are the Ten Commandments. Please look at them and tell me, for each one, whether it still applies fully today, whether it applies today to a limited extent, or no longer really applies today (a) for yourself, and (b) to most people. First for yourself...

I. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods before me.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	79%	37%
To limited extent	10	44
Doesn't apply	8	9
Don't know	3	10

II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	68%	27%
To limited extent	20	48
Doesn't apply	10	18
Don't know	2	7

III. Thou shalt keep the Sabbath holy.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	57%	23%
To limited extent	24	51
Doesn't apply	17	18
Don't know	2	8

IV. Thou shalt honor thy mother and thy father.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	90%	46%
To limited extent	7	43
Doesn't apply	1	5
Don't know	2	6

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V. Thou shalt not kill.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	93%	52%
To limited extent	4	36
Doesn't apply	1	4
Don't know	2	7

VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	87%	33%
To limited extent	8	48
Doesn't apply	3	12
Don't know	2	7

VII. Thou shalt not steal.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	93%	39%
To limited extent	5	47
Doesn't apply	1	8
Don't know	2	6

VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	89%	38%
To limited extent	8	47
Doesn't apply	1	8
Don't know	2	8

IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	89%	37%
To limited extent	6	47
Doesn't apply	2	9
Don't know	2	8

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

	Self	Others
Applies fully	88%	35%
To limited extent	8	48
Doesn't apply	2	8
Don't know	2	8

NOTE: Some tables do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Europeans and the Ten Commandments

As determined by an analysis of the European section of the values survey by the late Jean Stoetzel, who was director of the Gallup-affiliated *Faits et Opinions*, "for two-thirds, the Ten Commandments apply fully, and if you add those who say that the Commandments apply to a limited extent, you find more than eight out of 10 who somehow comply with the Decalogue.

Western Europe remains a Christian continent, but not in the eyes of the people themselves. When asked if they feel that the Commandments still apply to 'most people,' less than one-fourth say they do; furthermore, less than two-thirds say they apply either fully or to a limited extent."

How Many Teens Can Name the Ten Commandments?

Commandments Named:	All teenagers	Regular churchgoers	Non-regular
Don't steal	68%	73%	63%
Don't commit adultery	61	69	54
Don't murder	59	67	52
Don't covet	37	45	30
Honor mother and father	34	45	24
Don't bear false witness	29	36	22
Don't take Lord's name in vain	28	33	24
Don't have other gods	25	35	15
Keep Sabbath Day	16	24	9
Don't worship idols	10	13	7

The above results are based on 1,003 telephone interviews conducted in 1980 with a representative cross-section of teens, ages 13 to 18.

Views of Canadians on Gays In Clergy, Other Occupations

While half of Canadians believe the number of homosexuals is greater now than 25 years ago, and four-in-five feel they are more accepted by society today, Canadians continue to have reservations about gays.

Gallup Poll results show that 53% of the adult population think there are more homosexuals today than there were 25 years ago, and 80% feel that, as a group, homosexuals are more accepted by society than they were previously. These opinions are held fairly generally across all age and religious groups.

Questioned further on whether homosexuals can be good Christians or Jews, about two-third's (68%) hold a positive position nationally. But young Canadians (under thirty years of age) are much more likely to be convinced of this (74%) than are those in the fifty year or older age group (58%). On this issue, Roman Catholics and those who hold no religious preference are slightly more positive than Protestants or other religious affiliates.

Younger Found More Tolerant

Only one-quarter (25%) of Canadians believe that gays should be allowed to adopt children. Again on this issue, there are only slight differences by religious groups, but over one-third (35%) of young adults agree compared with only 15% of those in the older group.

Inclusion of gays in specific occupational groups draws varied responses. While almost three-quarters (72%) find them acceptable in sales positions, and about three-in-five give their assent to homosexuals as members of the armed forces (60%) or as parliamentary representatives (62%), fewer feel they would be acceptable as doctors (52%), as junior school teachers (45%), as clergymen (44%) or as prison officers (44%).

Young adults 18 to 29 years of age, tend to be more tolerant about inclusion of gays in almost all of these suggested occupational groups. And, on the whole, Roman Catholics tend to find homosexuals more acceptable in these specific occupations than do Protestants.

The current controversy among United Church members about the acceptance of homosexual clergymen appears to be fairly general among the Canadian population. Overall, 44% of Canadians accept homosexual clergymen, while slightly more (48%) reject them.

While no breakout of United Church Members is possible, Protestants are slightly less prone to accept (39%) than reject (54%) homosexual clergymen.

Results are based on 1,041 personal interviews with adults, 18 years and over, conducted between April 6-9. A sample of this size has a four percentage point margin of error, 19 in 20 times.

Many Say They Can Be 'Good' Catholics Without Following Church's Teachings

Significant numbers of Catholics in the U.S. believe they can be "good" Catholics without adhering to all tenets of official church belief. Seven in 10 (70%), for example, say that a person can be a good Catholic without going to church every Sunday, or without obeying the church's teaching regarding birth control (66%).

The survey, conducted for the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co., also revealed considerable loyalty among Catholics toward the church, with two-thirds saying they would almost never consider leaving the church.

Another key set of findings from this major survey showed half of Catholics (49%) saying the Catholic church is "the most important" or "among the most important" parts of their lives. Only 12% said "not terribly important" or "not very important to me at all."

These findings are from a national survey of 1,000 Catholics developed for the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co. by a team of sociologists headed by William D'Antonio, Executive Director of the American Sociological Association. The NCR/Gallup Poll was conducted by telephone during the first two weeks of May, 1987, and reported in the National Catholic Reporter (September 11, 1987). The survey, which covered many key areas, was aimed at measuring Catholic attitudes about decision-making and authority in the church.

Here are the questions and the findings that deal with the areas covered in this article:

Do you think a person can be a good Catholic without performing these actions?

	Yes %	No %
Without going to church every Sunday	70	27
Without contributing money annually to the special collection for the Pope (Peter's Pence)	68	27
Without obeying the church's teaching regarding birth control	66	27
Without going to private confession at least once a year	58	38
Without obeying the church's teaching regarding divorce and remarriage	57	34
Without receiving communion during Easter time	54	42
Without getting married in the church	51	45
Without believing in the infallibility of the Pope	45	46
Without donating time or money to help the poor	44	51
Without obeying the church's teaching regarding abortion	39	55

NOTE: Percentages do not add to 100% because the "not sure" response has been omitted.

On a scale of one through seven with one being, "I would never leave the Catholic Church," and seven being, "Yes, I might leave the Catholic Church," where would you place yourself?

Would never leave						Might leave
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55%	9%	9%	10%	7%	3%	6%

NOTE: Percentages do not add to 100% because "don't know" response has been omitted.

How important is the Catholic Church to you personally?

The most important part of my life	13%
Among the most important parts of my life	36
Quite important to me, but so are many other areas of my life	38
Not terribly important to me	9
Not very important to me at all	3
Not sure	1

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Special Analysis of Churchgoing by Age, Parenthood, and Marital Status

A special analysis of churchgoing on the basis of age, parenthood, and marital status underscores earlier findings that show that one's having children (of school age) has a decided impact on one's rate of churchgoing.

Here are some specific points from this analysis, which is based on a Times Mirror survey, conducted in April/May 1987:

- Among young married couples (under 40) who do not have children, 27% attend church or synagogue every week or almost every week. Among young marrieds with children, however, the figure is 43%.
- Among older married couples (40 and older), no differences in the rate of churchgoing are found between those couples who do not have children and those who do. A total of 48% of the older couples without children attend every or almost every week, matching the 48% who have children. (It is important to bear in mind, of course, that a significantly high proportion of these children would be adults.)
- Among young singles (under 30) relatively few attend church or synagogue, whether or not they have children — 23% in the case of singles who do not have children, and 21% in the case of those who do have children. However, in the next age group (30 to 39), singles without children are less likely to attend than singles who have children.

The table below reveals the impact of age, parenthood, and marital status on the frequency of attendance:

Here is the question:

Do you go to (church/synagogue) every week, almost every week, once a week, once a month, a few times a year, or never?

Here are the results:

Churchgoing by Age, Parenthood, Marital Status

	Single, no children, 18-29 yrs. %	Single, no children, 30-49 yrs. %	Single, children, 18-29 yrs. %	Single, children, 30-49 yrs. %	Married, no children, 18-40 yrs. %	Married, children 18-40 yrs. %	Married, children 40 & over %	Married, no children 40 & over %	Single, 40-59 years %	Single, 60 & over %
Every week	13	10	12	19	15	27	32	34	22	39
Almost every week	10	11	14	13	12	16	16	14	11	15
Once or twice a month	15	12	20	19	18	13	11	14	17	11
A few times a year	38	38	36	39	37	27	28	26	31	21
Never	23	28	18	8	15	16	12	12	18	13
No opinion	1	1	*	2	3	1	1	*	1	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* Less than one percent.

(Results based on a Times Mirror survey of 4,224 U.S. adults, 18 and older, conducted by The Gallup Organization during the period April-May, 1987.)

Bernardin, Burrows, Gallup To Speak At Congress 88

A cardinal, a general, and a pollster highlight the general session speakers at Congress 88: A National Festival of Evangelism in Chicago, August 4-8. Up to 15,000 participants are expected from 100 church bodies and organizations at the event sponsored by the Washington Roundtable on Evangelism, a national organization of directors of evangelism and church growth.

Plenary speakers include: Bishop Woodie W. White, United Methodist resident bishop of the Central and Southern Illinois Annual Conferences
Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Roman Catholic archbishop of Chicago
George Gallup, Jr., president of The Gallup Poll and executive director of the Princeton Religion Research Center
Dr. Harold A. Carter, pastor of the New Shiloh Baptist Church, Baltimore
General Eva Burrows, general of the Salvation Army forces in 90 countries
Dr. H. Eddie Fox, chief executive for evangelism for the United Methodist Church
Father Alvin Illig, founding director of the Paulist Fathers' National Catholic Evangelization Association
Dr. Robert L. Hamblin, vice president, evangelism, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention
Dr. Leighton Ford, evangelist and formerly vice president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

"It has been well said that the cost of a divided church is an unbelieving world," observed Dr. Paul Benjamin, executive director of Congress 88. "With additional millions around the globe searching for a meaningful faith, we can no longer afford the luxury of our competing divisions. Let us join together in Chicago, sharing ideas and resources, and helping to carry out our Lord's great commission and His prayer for a unified church." For further information, call: (703) 471-1988.

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PRINCETON RELIGION RESEARCH CENTER
P.O. Box 310
53 Bank Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08542

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Ms. Jeanne Long
Cong. Info. Serv.
4520 East-West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

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